

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for identifying users to whom to promote a selected auction, the selected auction having users that have already bid in the selected auction, the method comprising:

in the computer system, for each of a plurality of examined auctions other than the selected auction,

distinguishing the examined auction if the number of users that have bid in the selected auction that also bid in the examined auction exceeds a minimum threshold;
and

in the computer system, for each of the distinguished auctions, identifying users that bid in the distinguished auction and did not bid in the selected auction; and
notifying the identified users about the selected auction.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein notifying the identified users includes ~~further comprising~~ promoting the selected auction to the identified users.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein notifying the identified users includes ~~further comprising~~ transmitting electronic mail messages promoting the selected auction to the identified users ~~promoting the selected auction to them.~~

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising, when any of the identified users request a selected web page:

incorporating in the selected web page information promoting the selected auction;
and

after such incorporation, returning the selected web page to the user.

5. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computer system to ~~identify~~ perform a method for identifying users to whom to promote a

selected auction, the selected auction having users that have already bid in the selected auction, the method comprisingby:

for an examined auction other than the selected auction, distinguishing the examined auction if the number of users that have bid in the selected auction that also bid in the examined auction exceeds a minimum threshold; ~~and~~

if the examined auction is distinguished,

identifying users that bid in the distinguished auction and did not bid in the selected auction; and

promoting the examined auction to the identified users.

6. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium of claim 5 wherein the ~~contents of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to promote the selected auction to the identified users~~promoting the examined auction to the identified users includes transmitting an ICQ instant message to at least one of the identified users.

7. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium of claim 5 wherein the ~~contents of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to transmit electronic mail messages to the identified users promoting the selected auction to them~~promoting the examined auction to the identified users includes transmitting an electronic mail message to at least one of the identified users.

8. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 5 wherein the contents of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to, when any of the identified users request a selected web page:

incorporate in the selected web page information promoting the selected auction;
and

after such incorporation, return the selected web page to the user.

9-28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously Presented) A method in a computer system for promoting a first auction in which a first user has bid, comprising:

in the computer system, identifying a second user that has not bid in the first auction and that has bid in a second auction in which the first user has bid; and

in the computer system, promoting the first auction to the second user.

30. (Original) A computer system for promoting a first auction in which a first user has bid, comprising:

a user identification subsystem adapted to identify a second user that has not bid in the first auction and that has bid in a second auction in which the first user has bid; and

an auction promotion subsystem adapted to promote the first auction to the second user.